

Appln. No. 10/697,220
Response dated Feb. 22, 2006
Reply to Office Action of Dec. 22, 2005
Docket No. BOC9-2003-0050 (421)

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

These remarks are made in response to the Final Office Action of December 22, 2005 (Office Action). As this response is timely filed within the 3-month shortened statutory period, no fee is believed due.

At page 2 of the Office Action, Claims 1-6, 8-13, and 15-21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,275,575 to Wu (hereinafter "Wu") in view of U.S. Published Patent Application No. 2003/0035381 to Chen, *et al.* (hereinafter "Chen"). At page 13, Claims 7, 14 and 22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wu in view of Chen and further in view of U.S. Published Patent Application No. 2004/0199580 to Zhakov, *et al.* (hereinafter "Zhakov").

Independent Claims 1, 8, 15 and 16 have been amended to further emphasize certain aspects of Applicants' invention. Claims 2 and 9 have been canceled. The amendments as discussed herein, are supported throughout the Specification. No new matter has been introduced by virtue of the claims amendments.

I. Applicants' Invention

It may be helpful to reiterate certain aspects of Applicants' invention prior to addressing the cited references. The invention provides a method, system, and apparatus for aggregating teleconference services using an interactive voice response system. More particularly, the present invention provides an interactive voice response service that can be accessed through a webpage by subscribers. The method can include receiving a text registration from a caller accessing a webpage; converting the text registration to a spoken registration; registering the caller with the interactive voice response system using the spoken registration; authorizing access to a calendar system containing a telephone

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number or a network address for a scheduled conference call; and accessing the calendar system used by the registered caller to determine teleconference data. At approximately a time of the conference call, the method includes automatically calling the telephone number or the network address for the conference call, establishing contact with the registered caller using a landline connection or an Internet Protocol (IP) connection, announcing the caller to conference call by presenting the spoken registration, and joining the registered caller with the conference call.

With the invention, a user does not need to track and remember a telephone number and access code for each teleconference in which the user is scheduled to participate; the user need only remember at most one telephone number and personal identifier for the interactive voice response system. The user can register for upcoming conferences on-line through webpage access.

II. The Claims Define Over The Prior Art

As noted above, Claims 1-6, 8-13, and 15-21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Wu in view of Chen. Wu is directed to a method and system for remotely accessing a cross-platform telephone conference system for the purpose of coordinating and initiating multi-point telephone conference meetings. Chen is directed to teleconferencing and, more particularly, to setting-up and controlling a teleconference using a data network regardless of the individual's ability to directly access conferencing capabilities.

By contrast, Applicants' invention utilizes intelligent agents and network based software application modules to facilitate the setup and initiation of telephone conference calls from locations remote from the telephone conference server and associated equipment. This includes registering with an on-line calendar system through a webpage access. According to Applicants' invention, a caller can register with an interactive voice

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response system through an on-line calendar. The calendar can communicate with the interactive voice response system to register the caller on a conference call system. For example, a caller can enter text registration into a webpage to register the caller for receiving conference calls or to be placed into conference at a later time. The calendar includes a text-to-speech engine that converts text registration into a spoken registration. For instance, the caller can enter text registration information into the webpage, such as a name and number in a text format, which the calendar system then converts to spoken registration information. As is known in the art, the interactive voice response system is structured to process only spoken utterances. Accordingly, the calendar system performs an interface function for registering the caller with IVR by converting text registration received on-line to speech registration. Understandably, a caller may not have immediate access to a telephone but the caller can register on-line through access to the calendar system to register with the conference call system. Understandably, the caller can register with the calendar at an earlier date using webpage text access, under an assumption that the conference call may start at a later date when the caller has access to a telephone.

As amended, Claim 1 recites features not taught by Wu or Chen. In particular, Applicants teach that a text registration can be received from a caller accessing a webpage, the text registration can be converted to a spoken registration, and the caller can be registered with the interactive voice response system using the spoken registration. Text registration through a webpage is a novel aspect of the invention not disclosed or taught by Wu or Chen (*Applicants Specification*, Pg. 7, paragraph [0021], "In another embodiment, the user can access a Web page to register"). Converting text registration to a spoken registration is another novel aspect of Applicants' invention not disclosed or taught by Wu or Chen (*Applicants Specification*, Pg. 6, paragraph [0018], "The Conference Call Aggregation Service (CCAS) Interactive Voice Response (IVR) also can

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include a text-to-speech (TTS) system ...". Understandably, Applicants' invention provides means for registering the caller on-line using text-to-speech functionality. Wu or Chen do not teach using text-to-speech through webpage access to register a caller within a calendar system for aggregating conference calls.

As amended, Claim 1 also recites authorizing access to a calendar system through a telephone number or a network address. Wu or Chen do not disclose or teach using a network address to register a user for a conference call. (*Applicants' Specification, Pg. 7, paragraph [0021], "The user can provide a network address or telephone number for reaching the user's calendar system".*)

As amended, Claim 1 also recites automatically calling the telephone number or the network address for the conference call at approximately a time of the conference call. Claim 1 teaches establishing contact with the registered caller using one of a landline connection and an Internet Protocol (IP) connection. Wu or Chen do not disclose or teach calling a network address or establishing a conference call over an IP connection. (*Applicants Specification, Pg. 6, paragraph [0018], "The CCAS IVR 105 also can be accessed through an IP-based telephone, such as computer 135 or another IP-based telephony device by dialing a number or accessing a network address".*)

As amended, Claim 1 also recites announcing the caller to conference call by presenting the spoken registration. Understandably, the caller can register for conference calls on-line through the webpage access. The text registration provided by the caller can include the caller's name. The text-to-speech system in the calendar can convert the name from a text format to a spoken format which can be processed and played by the IVR conference call system. The IVR can announce the name of the caller joining the conference call using the spoken representation of the caller's name.

As amended, Claim 9 is directed to a machine readable storage having stored thereon a computer program, the computer program having a plurality of code sections

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executable by a machine for causing the machine to perform steps as recited in Claim 1. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully pose the same arguments as presented for overcoming the rejections of Claim 1; that is, Wu and Chen, do not disclose or teach receiving a text registration from a caller accessing a webpage, converting the text registration to a spoken registration, and registering the caller with the interactive voice response system using the spoken registration. Wu or Chen do not disclose or teach using a network address to register a user for a conference call. Wu or Chen do not disclose or teach calling a network address or establishing a conference call over an IP connection. Wu or Chen do not teach announcing a caller using a spoken registration converted from a text registration through on-line webpage access.

As amended, Claim 15 is directed to a system for aggregated conference calls. The system includes a network accessible calendar system having calendar data specifying times for teleconferences and telephone numbers for the teleconferences and configured to authorize access of a caller registered through a web page that converts a text registration to a spoken registration with the system. The system also includes an interactive voice response system configured to scan the calendar system data for a scheduled teleconference and obtain teleconference data specifying one of a telephone number and a network address for the scheduled teleconference. The interactive voice response system automatically calls the telephone number or the network address for the teleconference using one of a landline connection and an Internet Protocol (IP) connection at approximately a time the teleconference is scheduled, establishes contact with the registered caller, announces said caller by presenting said spoken registration, and joins the registered caller to the teleconference.

As amended, Claim 16 presents a system for aggregating conference calls. The system includes means for receiving a text registration from a caller accessing a webpage, means for converting the text registration to a spoken registration, means for registering

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the caller with the interactive voice response system using the spoken registration, means for authorizing access to a calendar system containing one of a telephone number and a network address for a scheduled conference call, means for accessing the calendar system used by the registered caller to determine teleconference data, means for, at approximately a time of the conference call, automatically calling one of the telephone number and a network address for the conference call, means for establishing contact with the registered caller using one of a landline connection and an Internet Protocol (IP) connection, means for announcing said caller to conference call by presenting the spoken registration, and means for joining the registered caller with the conference call.

As amended, Claims 15 and 16 each recite features not taught by Wu or Chen. In particular, Wu and Chen do not expressively or inherently teach receiving a text registration from a caller accessing a webpage, converting the text registration to a spoken registration, and registering the caller with the interactive voice response system using the spoken registration. Wu or Chen do not disclose or teach using a network address to register a user for a conference call. Wu or Chen do not disclose or teach calling a network address or establishing a conference call over an IP connection. Wu or Chen also do not teach announcing a caller using a spoken registration that was converted from a text registration using a calendar system accessed by an on-line webpage.

Applicants respectfully assert, therefore, that the combined the references fail to teach or suggest each feature of amended independent Claims 1, 8, 15, and 16, and that the claims thus define over the prior art. Applicants, moreover, respectfully assert that whereas the remaining claims each depend from one of the amended independent claims, the dependent claims likewise define over the prior art.

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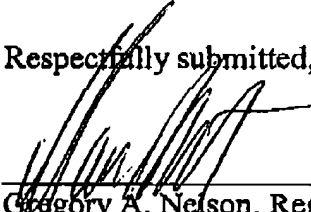
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CONCLUSION

Applicants believe that this application is now in full condition for allowance, which action is respectfully requested. Applicants request that the Examiner call the undersigned if clarification is needed on any matter within this Amendment, or if the Examiner believes a telephone interview would expedite the prosecution of the subject application to completion.

Respectfully submitted,

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Gregory A. Nelson, Registration No. 30,577
Richard A. Hinson, Registration No. 47,652
Marc A. Boillot, Registration No. 56,164
AKERMAN SENTERFITT
Customer No. 40987
Post Office Box 3188
West Palm Beach, FL 33402-3188
Telephone: (561) 653-5000

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